

## Rep. Baird Urges President to Convene International Meth Summit (December 8, 2005)

Washington, D.C. - Congressman Brian Baird urged President Bush to convene an international summit to address the control of methamphetamine and the international meth trade. A bipartisan group of leading congressional anti-meth advocates signed onto Congressman Baird's request.

It is our hope that by strengthening the system established to control both domestic and international methamphetamine production and trafficking, we will also be able to more effectively deal with the emergence of the next generation synthetic drug, the lawmakers wrote in their request.

The United Nations 2005 World Drug Report reported that amphetamines are the most widely abused illicit drugs.

Congressman Baird, a national leader in the anti-meth fight, founded the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine in 2000. Last month, the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) requested Congressman Baird's input into the 2006 National Drug Control Strategy. Prior to coming to Congress, Congressman Baird was a clinical psychologist who worked with meth addicts, learning firsthand the destructive potential of the drug.

---

December 7, 2005

President George W. Bush

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush,

We are writing to urge you to convene an international summit to address the control of methamphetamine and the diversion of precursors. Specifically, we ask you to support in this summit the greater involvement of international policing and customs organizations, expanding resources and hired persons to track international shipments of ephedrine, pseudoephedrine and other substances as controlled by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), and the research and development of substances that can effectively replace primary precursors used in the manufacture of synthetic drugs.

In Congress, we have taken steps to establish domestic import and export quotas of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. We have done so because we understand the market is changing from one previously dominated by domestic meth producers, to one now dominated by foreign traffickers. As the meth market evolves, so too must we as policymakers.

As you know, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine are not listed under Schedules I, II, III, or IV of the 1971 United Nations (UN) Convention on Psychotropic Substances. Instead, these methamphetamine precursors are internationally controlled under the 1988 Convention, an agreement which set forth a separate set of policies specifically affecting the handling of listed precursors. While we acknowledge and appreciate steps taken to control precursors under the 1988 Convention, we are concerned that loopholes exist. For example, annual assessments of medical and scientific needs of each signatory country for substances listed in Schedules II, III and IV of the 1971 Convention, of which amphetamine and methamphetamine are listed, are published regularly by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). They do so in order to assist the national authorities of exporting countries in ascertaining whether a requested import appears to be excessive in comparison with a reported annual requirement for that country. If a country is attempting to export more than the amount published in the annual assessment for the receiving country, that export would be denied by INCB until the authorities of the receiving country confirm the legitimacy of the import request and authenticate the import documents.

These assessments exist to provide countries with necessary diversion information. We urge you to support efforts to make available similar information on the importation and exportation of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine for all nations. We believe that this data can be shared and monitored without harming the legitimate transfer and production of substances for the manufacturing of medications and for scientific use.

We also ask that you assist the INCB in expanding and improving its ability to monitor the international trade in psychotropic substance and precursors. As you know, the INCB collects, collates and analyzes statistical and other information which countries provide on narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors. Based on this data, INCB analyzes the licit movement of drugs, the trends in illicit activities and detects diversion. The 2004 INCB report on the Implementation of Article 12 of the 1988 Convention stated that based on their current needs, signatory countries are urged to make available both financial and human resources to support operational activities. In fact, the UN has been expressing these needs since the 1988 Convention when they stated that they are deeply disturbed by the impact of recent staffing and budgetary reductions on the capacity of both the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the secretariat of the INCB to carry out fully their mandated programme of work. As a nation leading the global fight against drug trafficking, we must support the efforts of the INCB and encourage our partner nations to do the same.

The INCB has also requested that international policing bodies, such as the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Customs Co-operation Council (World Customs Organization) as well as regional bodies continue to assist in the operations. The United States should support increasing resources to assist the INCB and strengthen coordination with Interpol, UNODC, and the World Customs Organization as they are vital in the coordination between countries in tracking the illegal shipment of substances.

Additionally, we urge you to work with the World Health Organization in supporting the research and development of substances capable of replacing primary precursors used in methamphetamine production and the production of other synthetic drugs. We know that precursors such as pseudoephedrine are already being pushed out of the legitimate market due to newly enacted policies, and that they are being replaced with an equally effective ingredient, phenylephrine, that cannot be made into methamphetamine. We must support similar R&D activities, and, as the market changes, we must also closely monitor production so that replaced precursors are not dumped on the black market.

Thank you for reviewing our recommendation in moving forward with an international summit on the control of methamphetamine. It is our hope that by strengthening the system established to control both domestic and international methamphetamine production and trafficking, we will also be able to more effectively deal with the emergence of the next generation synthetic drug. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Brian Baird, Meth Caucus Founder

Leonard Boswell, Meth Caucus Co-Chair

Dennis Cardoza, Meth Caucus Member

Rick Larsen, Meth Caucus Co-Chair

Mark Souder, Chairman, Government Reform Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources

Ken Calvert, Meth Caucus Co-Chair